

FATALITY



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, III CORPS AND FORT HOOD
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AFZF-SAFE

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

27 JUL 2006

SUBJECT: Independence Day Holiday Costly – Fatality Memo 06 -12

1. Three III Corps Soldiers died over the Independence Day weekend as a result of three separate accidents. The first Soldier died when he lost control of his speeding motorcycle and impacted a tree along a residential street. On that same day, a second Soldier perished in another crash when he made a high-speed turn onto a main roadway and collided head-on with a large SUV towing a trailer. While details of these two fatal accidents are under investigation, several contributing factors are known. Operator overconfidence in their motorcycle driving skills was a likely contributor in both accidents, as was indiscipline evidenced by the fact that neither Soldier was wearing a helmet, were not properly licensed, and had not attended motorcycle safety training. A third Soldier perished in a single vehicle accident while on emergency leave from Iraq. The Soldier departed his residence after a domestic dispute, and while operating his privately owned vehicle (POV) at a high speed, failed to negotiate an intersection and was ejected from his vehicle.

2. Within III Corps, we have seen **14** Soldiers die as a result of POV and motorcycle accidents during the current fiscal year. Army-wide **90** POV and motorcycle deaths have been recorded for this same period. Historically, the major common death or injury-producing factors while operating POV or motorcycles/ATV vehicles are failure to follow safe-driving principles, selective non-use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), improper/inadequate motorcycle operator training, complacency, and lack of leader involvement to ensure standards are met.

3. Leaders and individuals should not consider motorcycle and ATV activities low risk, especially when the operator has little or no recent road experience. Safe motorcycle handling requires proper Soldier supervision and enforcement of standards. Each Soldier must take responsibility for his/her off-duty vehicle utilization procedures to include obtaining qualified training, licensing, and the wearing of mandatory PPE. Soldiers experiencing domestic family problems should also be considered high risk. Do not allow yourself or those around you to become complacent at any time.

4. As warfighters, we must maintain our focus on the Global War on Terrorism, but we are also challenged with home station accident prevention. Commanders must be innovative, committed, and make a difference in protecting our Soldiers. Failure to execute and enforce safe motorcycle handling procedures and training standards is not acceptable. We must continue to mentor our Soldiers to ensure the right risk decisions are made to avoid senseless accidents.

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RAYMOND T. ODIERNO
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

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